

## Herbarium mounts in cellophane

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During the summer of 1936 the writer began preparing herbarium specimens by enclosing them in cellophane. Pierce<sup>1</sup> has since described an essentially similar method and has noted that specimens mounted under cellophane preserve to a marked degree the natural colors of the leaves and flowers. As this use of cellophane has advantages not mentioned by Pierce, the procedure used by the writer together with the advantages of the method will be briefly reported.<sup>2</sup>

The procedure consists simply of enveloping in cellophane the herbarium sheet with the attached specimen. The edges of the cellophane are folded on the reverse side of the sheet and fastened down along their whole lengths with strips of adhesive cellophane. It was found, as Pierce also notes, that adhesive cellophane is superior to the ordinary gummed paper strips for fastening specimens to the sheet.

The most important advantage of this method is the prevention of the disintegration of specimens. It should be especially practicable for classroom herbaria and other herbaria which are subject to frequent handling. Since the enveloping cellophane is perfectly transparent, no difficulty is encountered in studying the specimen through a lens.

Much of the natural color is preserved by the use of cellophane. Although sufficient time has not yet elapsed to determine whether the colors are preserved indefinitely, the method promises excellent results. Pierce's statement that the exclusion of air is an important factor in the preservation of plant colors deserves to be borne in mind.

Another advantage is that periodic fumigation would probably be unnecessary if the mount were perfectly sealed. The greatly increased attractiveness of the mount is a further advantage, although there is one disadvantage in that roots which are too bulky cannot be included.

<sup>1</sup> W. Dwight Pierce, *SCIENCE*, 84: 253-254, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> The writer's attention has been called to an unsigned note in *TORREYA* 35: 161 which states that Fessenden used cellophane in preserving plant colors. Details of the method are not given, but Fessenden apparently used some chemical treatment to prevent the fading of colors.

For larger herbaria, cellophane envelopes whose single flaps could be easily sealed might be procured. The type of cellophane which is impermeable to gases and vapors would probably prove superior to the ordinary type in preserving the plant over a long period of time.

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